



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Local Teens Knit Blankets for the Police Department**

**SANTA BARBARA, CA – March 28, 2012**

On Monday, April 2, 2012 teens from the Santa Barbara Police Activities League (SBPAL) Knitting Club will present Chief Cam Sanchez with care bags containing hand knit blankets to be placed in the trunks of all SBPD patrol cars. The purpose is so that the blankets can be given to children officers encounter in crisis situations, such as domestic violence and abuse. The ceremony will take place at 4:00 p.m. in front of the Twelve35 Teen Center, located at 1235 Chapala Street.

The SBPAL Knitting Club was started in fall 2011 and consists of 8 girls and 2 boys of junior high and high school age who meet every Monday from 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Twelve35 Teen Center. The youths were taught how to knit by volunteers from the Breast Cancer Resource Center and Project Linus. After learning how to knit, the teens set out to create projects that would benefit their community. First, the club knitted 24 hats for the Breast Cancer Resource Center. After completing that project they set out to make blankets for the Police Department. The blanket project stemmed from an idea had by SBPAL's Executive Director, Laurie Parker, whose own son was seriously ill at a young age and hospitalized for a week. A local non-profit provided him with a handmade quilt during his stay at the hospital and she remembered how much the quilt helped to ease his pain. Ms. Parker thought that a blanket could be comforting to children affected by violence, and that having a warm soft blanket to hold could give them a sense of security. The blanket project is in full force and to date the Knitting Club has knitted 29 blankets, one for each of the 29 black & white SBPD patrol cars.

The Santa Barbara Police Activities League provides quality educational, cultural, and athletic programming for the youth of Santa Barbara to build positive relationships between the Police Department and all members of the community. Since 1999, SBPAL has offered activities for the youth of the community with a focus on low-income youth at risk of gang violence. SBPAL has grown from serving 50 children to now providing programming and services for 1,300 children every year, all at no cost to the families served.

The 9<sup>th</sup> Annual SBPAL Putting Kids First! Event is scheduled to take place on April 27, 2012 at 5:30 p.m. at the Santa Barbara Historical Museum at 136 East De La Guerra Street. The event, which benefits programs for the children of Santa Barbara, includes a hosted bar, dinner, dancing, and silent and live auctions. Tickets are available for \$250 per person.

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